

CHALLENGE



THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

Volume 51 No. 22

November 6, 2019

suggested donation \$1

Fight to Learn, Learn to fight

Strike against racism



CHICAGO, OCTOBER 23—The Chicago Public School education workers, numbering 30,000, are on strike against racist learning conditions affecting over 300,000 students, the majority of which are Black and Latin. A multiracial and inter-generational mix of education workers and supporters held daily pickets, rallies, marches, and teach-ins. This shows the potential of working-class unity and strength in one of the most segregated cities in the U.S.

We are learning to fight against capitalist racist schools and fighting to learn how only a communist education can provide a quality education for students. This bold antiracist fight is in constant risk of being sold out. Like all reforms, the struggle is compromised when the working class trusts bosses and union misleaders who ultimately serve the system.

Class struggle in session

Education workers launched the strike on October 17. Teachers remixed popular songs like Lizzy's "Truth Hurts" to fit the contract fight. At one school, teachers did a flash mob to block traffic. Facebook has been overflowing videos from pickets showcasing working-class creativity. Still, others led marches through neighborhoods to spread class consciousness. Workers from other unions and community organizations joined the actions and added their own character to the pickets.

Student-parent-worker unity

The strike galvanized young teachers and inspired veteran and retired educators to continue fighting. At a solidarity rally, a young Progressive Labor Party (PLP) teacher blasted the racist attacks in education on Black students and educators through defunding and continued school closings.

There has been immense support from stu-

dents, parents and other workers in the city. The bosses tried to drive a wedge between teachers and parents, but failed. Students and parents have been on the picket-line unapologetically standing with teachers. At the schools where PLers have been organizing, we helped with door-knocking and community outreach. It was essential for the strike to continue building mass support among education workers, parents, and students.

Communists from the international Progressive Labor Party (PLP) brought solidarity to strikers. Strikes can be schools for communism and demonstrate the potential power of the working class. We are actively working within the strike, seeking to push the limits beyond the reform goals. We fight for the line that a worthy education for the masses is a pipe dream under this racist profit system.

Smash racism and limits of union reformism

At its heart, the strike is an antiracist movement against despicable racist conditions that are the norm within schools under capitalism. A racist law passed in 1995 severely limited what teachers in Chicago could strike over.

But, as a result of fightback (against police terror, deportations, and gentrification), the struggle to improve conditions in the schools has expanded beyond just economic demands. The demands reflect the idea that the teacher's working conditions are students' learning conditions—staffing of social workers and nurses, smaller class sizes, a path to affordable stable homes for thousands of students, and more.

The liberal trap

No matter how well-intended these demands, the bosses will not protect working-class students. Democrats and Republicans have both waged

war on undocumented students and workers through mass detention and deportations. And with Chicago's move to become a "global city" (read: resegregation and gentrification), more displacement of Black and Latin workers is sure to follow (The Atlantic, 3/28/18).

The contract must be understood within this context: the liberal mayor Lori Lightfoot is already celebrating \$250 million dollars of "transformative change" that will be coming to exploited communities on the South and West sides (Chicago Sun Times, 10/22).

Neither the racist mayor Lightfoot nor the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) leadership will ensure antiracist learning conditions for students. Such is the nature of capitalist institutions. Rather, the union leadership will accept some minor reforms, then funnel the rank-and-file back into the classroom. The union bosses will continue to lead workers into the camp of the pro-capitalist liberal misleaders like Bernie Sanders, Elizabeth Warren, and Jesse Jackson.

Nothing fair under capitalism

The rallies call for a "fair contract," but nothing is fair under capitalism. The term "fair contract" hides the inherent exploitation and predatory nature of capitalism. By definition, workers cannot keep the true value of their labour. Without wage theft, there is no profit for the bosses. This profit system is the foundation of education for our working-class children.

Yet the struggle for a new union contract is pushed by the union misleadership as the pinnacle of fightback. Never mind that bosses will violate any contract when it suits them, because they hold state power (and use the police, media, courts, and military to exert that power).

If the contract is violated, what is the union misleadership to do? Push past the limits the bosses have set or push workers into legal arbitration? They will assure us our issues will be addressed in the next fight. Workers are then disarmed of their potential militancy and the capitalist reform treadmill goes on.

Fight to learn, learn to fight

History shows advances in education for the masses was made in revolutionary periods with communists and workers in charge. After the Bolshevik Revolution, the Soviet Union transformed a largely illiterate agrarian society to an advanced industrialized nation within the span of a generation. During the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China, the world witnessed the largest literacy campaign in human history. Millions of young students travelled from the cities to the countryside to break down barriers between manual and mental labor.

It's this revolutionary legacy that the communist PLP seeks to learn from and build upon. Workers, students, parents—join our international fight. Fight to learn, learn to fight! ✖

OUR FIGHT

- ★Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to destroy capitalism and the dictatorship of the capitalist class. We organize workers, soldiers and youth into a revolutionary movement for communism.
- ★The dictatorship of the working class — communism—can provide a lasting solution to the disaster that is today’s world for billions of people. This cannot be done through electoral politics, but requires a revolutionary movement and a mass Red Army led by PLP.
- ★Worldwide capitalism, in its relentless drive for profit, inevitably leads to war, fascism, poverty, disease, starvation and environmental destruction. The capitalist class, through its state power — governments, armies, police, schools and culture — maintains a dictatorship over the world’s workers. The capitalist dictatorship supports, and is supported by, the anti-working-class ideologies of racism, sexism, nationalism, individualism and religion.
- ★While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim “communism is dead,” capitalism is the real failure for billions worldwide. Capitalism returned to Russia and China because socialism retained many aspects of the profit system, like wages and privileges. Russia and China did not establish communism.
- ★Communism means working collectively to build a worker-run society. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. While capitalism needs unemployment, communism needs everyone to contribute and share in society’s benefits and burdens.
- ★Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of “race.” Capitalism uses racism to super-exploit Black, Latin, Asian and indigenous workers, and to divide the entire working class.
- ★Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women— sexism—and divisive gender roles created by the class society.
- ★Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.
- ★Communism means that the minds of millions of workers must become free from religion’s false promises, unscientific thinking and poisonous ideology. Communism will triumph when the masses of workers can use the science of dialectical materialism to understand, analyze and change the world to meet their needs and aspirations.
- ★Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers. Join Us!

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WHO WRITES FOR CHALLENGE?

CHALLENGE is for the working class, produced by the working class. The fact that CHALLENGE/PLP articles are not signed grows from PLP’s criticism of the cult of the individual in the former socialist Soviet Union and China. We do not want to encourage the possibility of building up a “following” around any particular individual.

While an article may be written by one person, the final version is based on collective discussion and criticism. Many times this collective discussion even precedes an individual’s writing of an article.

CHALLENGE/DESAFIO (ISSN 0009-1049) published bi-weekly by Challenge Periodicals. 1 issue \$1. One Year: \$20. Six months: \$15. Send address changes to CHALLENGE Periodicals, GPO Box 808 Brooklyn, NY 11202, November 6, 2019•Volume 51 No. 22

Editorial

U.S pullback in Syria will lead to more war

U.S. President Donald Trump’s withdrawal of U.S. troops from Syria dramatically sharpens the split within the U.S. ruling class. It’s a big win for the Little Fascists, the domestic-leaning, isolationist wing of the U.S. ruling class, and a huge loss for the Big Fascists, the main-wing finance capitalists who have led U.S. imperialism since the end of World War II. It drastically weakens the U.S. position in the Middle East and has opened the door for Russia to take over—at least for now—as the region’s alpha dog enforcer.

Workers cannot be fooled into supporting either section of the blood-soaked capitalist class. Far from the end to “endless wars” promised by Trump, the intensifying inter-imperialist competition between the U.S. and Russia and China will inevitably lead to full-blown fascism and the next world war, one that will slaughter hundreds of millions of workers. Only communist revolution can overthrow and dismantle the lethal capitalist system.

U.S. pulls back, Russia steps up

In December 2018, when Trump first announced a troop withdrawal from Syria, he was sabotaged by John Bolton, his national security advisor, and the old-school interventionists in the Republican Party. Trump’s main wing secretary of defense, James Mattis, resigned over the decision, saying it would play into the hands of the Islamic State (ISIS), the small-time capitalists who’d threatened U.S. oil interests.

But the Little Fascists behind Trump, including the Koch family, persisted. They have now pulled off a major foreign policy coup, enraging the main wing and further eroding the old liberal world order based on U.S. military dominance. As U.S. troops pulled out of northeastern Syria, they left a vacuum that Turkey and Russia were eager to fill (NYT, 10/15). Turkey invaded Syria and began bombarding and slaughtering civilians along the Syrian-Turkish border. Russian and Syrian troops loyal to President Bashar al-Assad moved to occupy much of the territory formerly held by U.S.-backed Kurdish nationalist rebels. The Kurdish bosses, who’d partnered with the U.S. in fighting ISIS, were forced to make a quick deal with the butcher Assad to contain the Turkish Army and rogue Syrian militias.

On October 22, two weeks after the U.S. withdrawal, Russian President Vladimir Putin sat down Turkey’s president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, to dictate a power-sharing arrangement with Assad—and make clear who was in charge. “Russia agreed to help Turkey create a ‘safe zone’ in northeastern Syria that is free of Kurdish fighters that Ankara views as a terrorist threat” (Wall Street Journal, 10/22). Beyond setting the stage for a racist ethnic cleansing, the land grab confirms Russia’s new status “as the dominant force in Syria and a major power broker in the broader Middle East at the expense of the United States” (NYT, 10/22).

The next oil war?

Meanwhile, Russia’s imperialist bosses are also using the U.S. retreat to strengthen their ties with the biggest oil producers. On October 14, Putin met with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman to explore “more promising opportunities in the two countries in all fields, including cooperation in energy and investment in the infrastructure” (gulfnws.com, 10/15). In a statement that sent shivers through the boardrooms of ExxonMobil and JPMorgan Chase, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed, de facto leader of the United Arab Emirates, declared: “I think of Russia as my second home. We are connected by a deep strategic relationship” (NYT, 10/15).

Both Russia and U.S. arch-enemy Iran have trained and armed troops in Syria for years. With the U.S. bowing out, they are ready to cash in on their investment. Russia originally intervened to help Assad in 2015, four years into Syria’s bloody civil war. To keep workers submissive, Russia’s bombing campaign has deliberately maximized civilian casualties. Hundreds of bombs were dropped on hospitals “to crush the last pockets of resistance” to Assad (NYT 10/13). One unanticipated consequence of these atrocities may be to push Syrian rebels into the waiting arms of ISIS, still a factor in the area.

Now that they have taken charge, Russia’s capitalist rulers will be tested. Whether they can keep the Syrian, Turkish, and Kurdish bosses in check—while preventing an ISIS revival—remains to be seen. But the nightmare for the liberal Big Fascists is that Russia is now shaping events in the geopolitically crucial Middle East. The main wing bosses can’t accept this

Syria provides a textbook example of what befalls the working class when inter-imperialist rivalry is combined with local thievery. An estimated 400,000 workers have been slaughtered and more than half the population turned into refugees, with five million forced to flee the country. Under Barack Obama, the U.S. imperialists fomented the “Arab Spring” and turned a 2011 rebellion against the brutal al-Assad regime into a bloodbath. To counter regional thugs in northern Syria like ISIS, the U.S. state terrorists armed their own thugs, the Kurdish People’s Protection Units (YPG). Turkey organized a competing anti-Assad militia. Iran dispatched thousands of troops to Syria to support Assad.

In 2014, as ISIS overran large sections of Eastern Syria and Northern Iraq, the Obama administration launched a bombing campaign to beat back the smaller terrorists. The following year, Obama sent troops into Syria. After Russia intervened in 2015 to prop up Assad and his Iranian backers, who were at that point losing the war, ISIS and most of the other rebel forces were crushed. But the YPG, later dubbed the “Syrian Democratic Forces,” survived with U.S. protection to claim and control the northeastern quarter of Syria. With the Trump withdrawal, the YPG’s future is in doubt. The same can be said of millions of Kurdish civilians, who historically have been the victims of racist violence in Syria, Iraq, and Turkey.

realignment without a fight. They’ll need to push back militarily in the region—which adds to their urgency in removing Trump by the 2020 elections, if not sooner.

Fortress America vs. liberal world order

Foreign Affairs, the journal of the liberal rulers’ top foreign policy think tank, the Council on Foreign Relations, has relentlessly attacked Trump’s Middle East policy. In a recent article headlined “Disaster in the Desert,” Martin Indyk rips the Trump team’s plan to offload responsibility for containing Iran and policing the volatile region onto U.S. allies Israel and Saudi Arabia (Nov.-Dec. 2019).

Back in 2016, the libertarian Charles Koch Institute warned against the U.S. arming the anti-Assad Syrian rebels: “[T]o ensure [that] decisions truly serve our vital strategic interests, U.S. leaders should consider the difficulties of training unaccountable rebel forces and pursuing... regime change in the Middle East. These decisions can carry high fiscal costs for the United States....”

Trump is cynically harnessing the anti-war sentiments of tens of millions and twisting them to enlist support for the domestic wing’s Fortress America strategy. Little Fascists like the Kochs have no problem with the U.S. sending drones to bomb civilians—mass murder on the cheap. But they don’t want to pay the tax bill for an overseas land war to protect the Big Fascists’ investments. They’re willing to take a back seat and hope the Russian bosses get bogged down in the Syria quagmire.

Imperialist war vs. communist revolution

In response to Trump’s abandonment of the Kurdish rebels who helped the U.S. stop ISIS in northern Syria, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a bipartisan measure condemning Turkey’s attack. Republicans in the U.S. Senate, on the other hand, are holding their cards close. Even as the Democrats move forward with impeachment, Trump’s base is holding firm. If the Republicans think they can keep their Senate majority in 2020 behind Trump, they’ll continue to back him. If they see Trump going down and threatening to take them with him, they may join the move to dump him. While the split between the Big Fascists and Little Fascists is primary, the opportunism of the bosses’ stooge politicians cannot be overestimated.

The world is swimming in volatility, from the looming Trump impeachment fight to mass rebellions in Lebanon and Chile to refugee crises in Syria and Central America. Workers have nothing to gain by allying with some “lesser evil” set of capitalist rulers. As the bosses prepare for their world war, the international working class must prepare to destroy the capitalist system. Only communism can wipe out the scourge of imperialism and create a world where wars for profit will become a distant memory. ☸

Justice for Leonard Shand means communism

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND—Ten cops from three jurisdictions surrounded and murdered Leonard Shand, a 49-year old Black worker on September 26. Despite years of struggle against racist police terror (which led to two separate Department of Justice civil rights consent decrees directed at the police department), the County continues to be another glaring racist failure of capitalism.

While the Black and white liberal misleaders tried to whitewash the racist actions of the police, members of Progressive Labor Party (PLP) called for these killer cops to be convicted for murder. Antiracists at the meeting agreed with this idea.

What does justice for Leonard look like? It looks like revolution, because a vicious system of racist repression won't stop until the working class makes a revolution to abolish this capitalist system. Police in a capitalist society have a job to do: protect the bosses' private property and power by terrorizing and dividing the working class through daily racist intimidation and violence. Leonard Shand is the latest target of this state terror. Immigration and Customs Enforcement is similarly used as an intimidating force against immigrant workers. PLP will continue to be in the forefront of every battle against brutality and intimidation by the police and ICE, while always pointing to the need for multi-racial, anti-racist, communist revolution to end such oppression permanently.

Vigil, conviction, and revolution

Forty protesters and family held a vigil where the kkkops gunned down Leonard Shand. The police murder and the whitewash was already underway: the police department that committed the crime will be in charge of conducting an investigation. PLP distributed CHALLENGE and the flyer condemning the racist murder. We also made connections with protesters, thus expanding the base for revolution against the racist capitalist sys-



tem. The next steps in this fight are to intensify the campaign to convict these cops for murder and recruit more fighters into the struggle for communist revolution.

City's hypocrisy reveals the failure of identity politics

The police are continuing an intense public relations campaign to protect the killer cops. Henry Stawinski, Prince George's County Police Chief, publicly complimented the officers for their "wisdom" and "correct procedure." Hyattsville Mayor Candace B. Hollingsworth and Police Chief Amal Awad—both Black, women, and pro-capitalist misleaders—tried to create a false narrative that the police acted appropriately at the community meeting, justifying the cops' murderous actions.

This exposes the failure of identity politics. One might be hesitant to criticize these liberal misleaders because they are Black women. But the mayor and chief's justification of this racist murder prove that multiracial capitalist apologists

The murder of Leonard Shand

How was Leonard Shand killed? When a Starbucks manager called the police to report the return of a man who had allegedly assaulted an employee, a cop responded. Leonard failed to comply and the cop tased him and called for backup.

More cops arrived. Leonard was holding a knife and muttering suicidal statements. Hyattsville police Chief Amal Awad later admitted that the cops on the scene were aware that Leonard was in an emotional crisis. Rather than de-escalating, the cops tased, pepper sprayed, and shot him with a beanbag round.

When the cops set off a flash-bang grenade behind him supposedly to "distract" him, Leonard lunged in the direction of one of the cops out of fear of the explosion.

Ten cops then opened fired with 20 shots, killing him. These ruthless killers then handcuffed Leonard! A system this vicious does not deserve to exist.

are still capitalists. The working class needs Black women leaders for communist revolution, not capitalism. Many appreciated the PLP flyer that verbally confronted the mayor and police chief over their efforts to whitewash the cops' actions.

A second vigil and rally will be held on October 25, and the movement to demand justice in this case will continue. As our comrades in Baltimore declare at the West Wednesday rallies, "We won't stop, can't stop, until killer cops are in cell blocks!" And that day will arrive when the working class seizes power and abolishes the reign of capitalism.✊

Newark: Lead & liberal misleaders poison workers

NEWARK, NJ, OCTOBER 2 — Workers in Newark are clapping back against Mayor Ras Baraka's liberal fascist politricks and the Progressive Labor Party (PLP) is participating in the crusade. At a State of the Water Town Hall event, workers blasted the mayor's team of panelists for dodging questions around whether or not the lead-infested water is currently safe enough to drink. As a result, workers sent in letters to CHALLENGE exposing how the ruling class attempts to make workers feel shamed for challenging politicians' inadequate attention to the world's aging infrastructure and its effect on working class people's living conditions.

Nationalism divides more than it unites

Instead of apologizing for his administration's negligence and outright lies, Baraka staged a dog and pony show at the event. "Don't come for my wife, don't come for my city! Talk about me! Talk about my shoes! The pants I'm wearing," he preached as the crowd roared in applause. This is the role of these fake "radical" politicians. Rather than organize workers to fight capitalism and the capitalist class that forces workers to be poisoned with lead, Baraka and other liberal politicians will take the bullets for the rulers. He then deflected attention from himself but drew hatred to the Newark Water Coalition, one of the working class movements in the city, claiming their allegations were merely a smear campaign against the city. But workers who eventually joined the Newark Water Coalition were the first to flag the lead in Newark's public schools originally in 2014. Yet, when members of the coalition spoke out at the meeting, the room booed, some yelling "take your check and go" as if they were simply paid agita-

tors. It was evident that Baraka's goal was to amplify the tension in the room and maximize the spirit of nationalism in Newark when he shouted out as protestors were being escorted by police that one of the leading organizers of The Newark Water Coalition wasn't from Newark but the surrounding town, West Orange. Yet, regional nationalism in Newark isn't strong enough to guarantee workers' faith in Baraka.

The bosses' politicians pick and choose when to rally workers behind nationalism. Newark is one of the largest hubs in the state of New Jersey for education, jobs, health care, and other vital necessities. Our needs as workers, regardless of where we lay to bed, demands that we are interconnected with workers in Newark. Baraka sees the involvement of workers in the greater Newark region as a threat. We as communists see solidarity between workers regardless of where we live as a growing necessity over time.

Beware of opportunists

"We have no confidence in this administration to provide us with our basic human right to clean water. Their negligence has already harmed us" (Star Ledger, 9/18).

With the major capitalists putting Ras Baraka on blast through news channel mouthpieces like The Star Ledger and The New York Times, Baraka needs to prove that he can win the working class in Newark to carry out the demands of the ruling class - gentrification and nationalism. Still he knows that some of his rivals are using the water crisis in Newark to get themselves on the bid.

Liberals lies a toxic poison

In the way the phony Baraka called a stop to

protests against charter schools on his first day in office, he's now practicing a more sophisticated tactic to simmer down the fiery spirit of working class people today. This time through billion dollar grants from the state, press releases on the day of major protests and high class Town Hall events.

Communism is the formula, PLP is the key ingredient

This water situation in Newark is a case study for the limits of politicians and why we need a communist revolution led by PLP, not another cycle of voting out the next Democrat or Republican both sets of traitors will never own up to their deceit and it's in the best interest of workers to stop expecting them to. What's driving this fight against Ras is people's criticism of his leadership but we must remember that Baraka is not the root of our problems; he is only the face representing the profits he works to protect. In order for workers internationally to truly grow and thrive, systems upheld by capitalism need to be smashed completely.

Although he is only the face, we must call out liberal fascist politicians like Baraka for leading working class people down a road of poverty, criminalization, displacement and further divisions. Yet, we must also acknowledge that a new breed of opportunists will run against Ras and try out the same tricks liberal politicians use once they're elected into office. Rather than bowing to the belief that politicians who make their claim to fame through grassroots campaigns are here to save us, join a study group and fight with PLP today!✊

MTA & Union misleaders derail workers on track to strike

NEW YORK CITY— Over 100 transit workers and supporters rallied today in a show of unity and opposition to the racist MTA bosses and the givebacks in their contract proposal. Working over five months without a contract, this rally was also a criticism of the do-nothing union leaders. They tell the members nothing about the contract except that negotiations are ongoing. Many workers are fed up.

With this rally we exerted a little working class power. Mainly rank and file members led it from several different departments. They spoke about the deplorable working conditions on the job. They spoke of plantation justice which means heavy punishments for the smallest infractions, mostly caused by the bosses’ speed up of train service. They spoke of the need to build rider and MTA worker unity against the MTA bosses and Governor Cuomo. After the rally, over 50 workers marched into the ongoing board meeting of the bosses and the room of suits became very uncomfortable. They started shuffling papers and fidgeting in their seats, and all their talks ended with how they have respect for the workforce. One worked yelled LIES! As they continued their presentation it was met with workers openly responding, “That’s a LIE!, which company?” There were jeers, boos and laughter.

We need frequent and bigger actions like this, not only to win our demands, but also to get off the capitalist treadmill of constantly fighting just to keep afloat. The MTA bosses are after our pay and benefits again. Their contract demands attack our health benefits, our sick and vacation time, and our job security. This further angered workers.

As we fight for a better contract, we must also fight to get rid of this capitalist system once and for all. Workers cannot only organize rallies and strikes; we can run all of society. That’s communism. Join the fight.

This rally originated at departmental union meetings. A proposal was passed to have a rally and action on September 25 in front of the MTA headquarters and attend their monthly board meeting after. However, the union leadership rejected the proposal and countered with a rally on October 30th at 5pm, citing the need for more time to organize the entire union. Many members questioned this move, since the MTA headquarters is empty by 5pm, and so the opportunity to confront the people who drafted the contract demands and sit in on the negotiations would be lost. What is clear to many members is that TWU Local 100 is not a fighting union. So, workers decided to stick with the September 25 rally and confrontation.

At the rally one speaker made a key point that workers’ wages are always up for negotiation but the MTA bosses always pay the debt service to the banks. It’s the banks and bondholders who control both the MTA and politicians like Cuomo. The MTA will raise fares, demand more from the workers, skimp on upkeep, and cut services in mainly Black and Latin neighborhoods, all so they can pay the banks. That’s capitalism and it has to go. The rally also had politicians who are running for local offices. They pledged to support the MTA workers, but as one worker said, “they seem fake and this what they always do to build for their campaigns.” Rank and file workers are already disgusted with

liberal governor Cuomo— even though the union leadership refused to criticize him one bit—as they see him as the guiding hand behind the racist attacks on the work force.

We see the boss together not alone

One thing that was even clearer to us is that everything boils down to dollars and cents. As MTA workers we regularly joke about just being a number to the bosses, but in the board meeting the actual cost was fitted perfectly on a Power-Point. You slip, trip or fall? You went out on comp, got assaulted at work, leave; all of it had the dollar amount and arrows going up or down explaining whether cost was going up, down, or neutral. The idea is to keep costs down, while keeping productivity and profits up.

The takeaway message from the day was that these guys are coming for blood and we have to prepare ourselves for that fight. Progressive Labor Party comrades in the workforce are pushing for more actions around the contract, and a fight against the racist scapegoating fare-beater campaign and the increased police presence on the subways and buses. Coworkers are open to talk more about the contract and what it would take for transit workers to get a better deal. More and more people are bringing up the idea of a strike. Building workers confidence in the working class is a long necessary fight and will continue during contract negotiations and after. It is an opportunity to win leadership for the working class, and to build for a communist society.☺

Letter

Contradictions of Hong Kong Protests

The New York Times recently presented the dramatic contrast of a huge choreographed show of Chinese nationalism in Beijing and pitched battles between protesters and police in the streets of Hong Kong. The Beijing spectacle, marking the 70th anniversary of the communist-led revolution in China that established the People’s Republic, was presented by the US capitalist press as a rising danger to be taken seriously. The bosses want to prepare us to fight against the Chinese to save U.S. capitalist domination. Few workers are won to that degree of blind nationalism, at least in the US. What lessons should workers of the world, including Chinese workers, take from this public display of political and military power?

It is important for workers outside China to understand that there are still communists in China. They just don’t run the government anymore. Challenge readers know that the Chinese “Communist” Party (CCP) turned away from communism and socialism and took a sharp turn toward capitalism in the 1970s. China now has the largest economy in the world. It also has a level of inequality on par with the US.

But inside China, Mao Zedong is still an important symbol. Although PLP’s assessment of Mao includes criticisms of some of his decisions, by any measure he was an important revolutionary leader. His death in 1976 gave the “capitalist roaders” inside the CCP the green light to get rich by building their economy along capitalist lines, including openly exploiting workers. To this day when workers go on strike or invade a government office or shut down traffic to protest the latest abuse by Chinese billionaires, these workers carry big pictures of Mao.

Chinese students and intellectuals have joined

forces with protesting workers and the Chinese government has responded with a wave of repression of leftist activists not seen in China for decades. The CCP is clearly worried about there being actual communists in the country, especially when they include a growing number of industrial workers. So when the CCP pulls out all the stops to show everyone – in China and outside China – that they are strong and unified, the CCP rulers are also trying to reassure themselves that there won’t be another communist revolution.

So, is Hong Kong some sort of revolutionary upsurge? The NYT would have us believe that Hong Kong protests are about “democracy.” They say Hong Kong citizens are fighting for an alternative to the repressive power of Beijing. Challenge correctly poked a hole in that simplistic bit of wishful thinking by the US billionaires. But is the increasingly intense conflict really “a reactionary, antiworker movement” as the Challenge editorial stated?

I discussed the Challenge article about the Hong Kong protests with a communist friend who has lived and worked in China and in the US for many years. He was surprised at the way our paper called these huge protests “reactionary.” He asked “is any protest that doesn’t call for communism reactionary?”

After seeing the political outcome of the “color revolutions” of Eastern Europe or of the uprisings of the Arab Spring, it is clear that the politics leading any struggle are key. However, I think my friend also has a point. He made this suggestion about analyzing mass uprisings:

“One needs to address the issue of [whether] the movement is making the working class bet-

ter organized. Did it further raise their class consciousness? Did it make them more militant? These 3 points are my criterion in judging any people’s movement. Sometime the 3 are in contradictions, more organized but less militant, or more militant but less class conscious, etc. It’s this type of analysis that is more useful than just one dimensional analysis.”Workers in every country should be glad to learn that there are still communists in China. It is very hard to know the size or potential strength of the pro-communist forces inside China today, and there is probably no unified, organized revolutionary party. If there were it would have to be deep underground. In particular, we know very little about the various political factions involved in the Hong Kong rebellion. But there are tens of millions of Chinese who consider themselves communists, many of whom understand that China has become an imperialist country and needs another revolution. Despite many capitalist influences, there must be a range of political groups active in Hong Kong. Unfortunately what gets translated into English is a tiny and biased sample of the reality there.

So while the leadership of the Hong Kong protests is still overwhelmingly reactionary, there is still potential for the blossoming of a communist workers movement.

Communists in all countries should try to learn from the revolutionary advances made by our class brothers and sisters in other countries. As the billionaires of various capitalist countries make their preparations for the next big war, we need to build our ties with other workers and activists , reaching across the borders the imperialists have drawn on our one world.

Workers fight liberal fascism and racist deportations

CHICAGO—Over 30 workers here in a south side neighborhood held a spirited rally against a racist Immigrant and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raid that occurred at a business in their community. Two days before, five workers from the Route 66 Pizza restaurant were detained as part of the racist capitalist bosses' continued terror campaign against immigrant workers.

As the bosses continue to inflict fear and division on the working class through fascist terror, it is all the more important that workers in all parts of the world react quickly and organize to counter their attacks. At the same time, these attacks are a logical consequence of an economic system based on profit, racism, and war. Comrades from Progressive Labor Party (PLP) were active in organizing this rally and shared the message that freedom from fascist terror is achieved by smashing the profit system with communist revolution!

Workers mount a rapid response

On the morning of September 23rd, ICE unexpectedly raided the restaurant, detaining four men and one woman. Although little was known in regards to details of the racist raid, PLP comrades and other workers knew we had to mount a rapid response. Two days later, on Wednesday, a rally was organized in front of the restaurant.

The restaurant is located by a busy intersection and the overwhelming majority of workers driving past responded positively by honking and raising their fists in solidarity with the protesters. In addition to honking in support, a number of workers from the community even parked their cars and came to join the rally in support of their fellow workers.

Instead of being an action dominated by liberal professional organizers and Democrat/ fake leftist political misleaders, the rally had a much

more grassroots character. Workers from the community saw other workers taking a stand, and felt a more organic sense of empowerment to participate.

Over the course of the rally, individuals took to the bullhorn to talk about their personal ties to the detained workers and the emotional toll the attack has taken on them. Other workers spoke about immigrant workers' motivations for fleeing capitalist violence in different parts of the world and their general opposition to ICE terrorizing working-class communities.

Smash racist borders with internationalism

Initially there were some nationalist chants, but attempts to sharpen them with chants reflecting an internationalist outlook were well received. For example, when one worker said "Viva Mexico" and "Viva los Estados Unidos," a comrade quickly responded with "¡Viva internacionalismo!" and instead of push back, there was general agreement. We also began designing posters with more pro-working class and international messages such as "ICE: Stop Terrorizing Our Communities," "Workers United Against Racism," and "Asian, Latin, Black, and White; Workers of the World Unite." Community members and comrades started leading unifying chants such as "Obreros unidos jamás serán vencidos" and "Escucha! Escucha! Estamos en la lucha!"

A PL'er made a short speech in which he encouraged workers to keep taking an active stand against the capitalist bosses' racist attacks and the need to constantly organize for workers' power. He explained that the intense violence against immigrant workers and refugees is a consequence of the economic and political crises that are inevitable under capitalism. He finished by calling

for workers to fight for communist revolution as the only way to guarantee a life of security for our class.

Almost everyone in attendance, especially the workers from the neighborhood, were eager to take a copy of CHALLENGE and share contact information. A follow-up protest was planned for the following Monday, and PL'ers are in contact with workers from the community.

Workers lose when liberals win

Although much of the pushback against current anti-immigrant racism is directed at Trump, these racist attacks are a problem of capitalism, and liberal politicians are just as guilty. Former Deportee-in-Chief Barack Obama set a new standard of anti-immigrant racism, deporting over three million workers over the course of his presidency (Wall Street Journal, 8/3). New "progressive" Mayor Lori Lightfoot was quick to tweet how much she "cared" about the safety of immigrant workers after the raid, but has refused for months to sign an executive order that would deny federal agents access to city databases (Chicago Sun-Times, 7/11).

All of these politicians back capitalism at the end of the day. They will only make fake efforts to ensure justice for our class. The designations of "documented" and "undocumented" workers serve the capitalists by dividing workers so that they can super-exploit certain workers' labor for maximum profits. These divisions then act as an anchor to hold down the entire working class. Liberalism is a losing strategy – we organize to destroy this racist profit system, its borders, and its inequality in favor of an egalitarian communist society!

Join PLP in the fight for communist revolution! All power to the international working class!✊

Pink Tide, capitalist reforms

In the 2000s, many countries in Latin America had a wave of democratic socialist governments, called the "Pink Tide." They bought workers' allegiance and cynicism about change, introduced reforms, and kept the working class tied to the hamster wheel of capitalism. Now, capitalist wars, exploitation, racism, and sexism continue. To eliminate these horrors, workers must overthrow the capitalist class and its government, and replace it with a government dedicated to the working class. That's communism.

Rise of Pink Tide

During the 1970s and 1980s, Latin American governments accepted loans from the U.S.-led International Monetary Fund (IMF). When they couldn't repay the loans, the U.S. forced them to adopt neoliberal austerity, which means deregulation, reduced government spending, layoffs, and privatization of services. Massive demonstrations got Pink Tide politicians elected, promising reforms.

These politicians espoused "democratic socialism", or reforming capitalism when in reality they played into the imperialist rivals' hands. While giving some welfare to workers, they made deals with various capitalists. They demanded more revenues from petrochemical and mining imperialists, either from nationalization or restructured deals with foreign investors.

All Pink Tide countries increased trade and investments with Russia and China. Commodity sales funded cash payments to workers, briefly elevating income. When prices fell, these payments were cut off, restoring poverty. Workers turned against the Pink Tide politicians.

Venezuela

Venezuela is dependent on oil export income to buy food and manufactured goods abroad. President Hugo Chavez promised a Bolivarian Revolution. His reforms included: cash payments to workers, land reform, free medical care, free housing, literacy, etc. He criticized capitalism, but his government included military leaders and capitalists. Chavez railed against U.S. imperialism, but implemented the IMF's austerity policies,

and maintained the U.S. as Venezuela's main trading partner. During 2017, under Chavez's successor Maduro, inflation reached 1,698,488 percent (Reuters, 2/21/18).

Brazil

The democratic socialist Workers' Party (PT) had an anti-capitalist platform: cancel international debt, nationalize business, redistribute land, and abolish capitalism. But PT president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva did the exact opposite. He implemented IMF austerity on workers, but invested \$343 billion to boost local capitalists. In contrast, his welfare program cost \$10.13 billion a year (Guardian, Dec 17, 2013). Briefly Lula was immensely popular. Lula's social programs were paid for by exports. When commodity prices dropped causing a recession, payments to workers were cancelled and finally his successor, Dilma Rousseff, was impeached.

Bolivia

Evo Morales of Bolivia led a popular movement against imperialism. Morales nationalized petrochemical industries to give \$5 billion a year to workers. As the economy grew, local capitalists benefitted. He simply distributed some export proceeds to buy votes, while assisting the mining industry to encroach on indigenous lands.

Ecuador

Rafael Correa was elected in the context of mass movements against austerity and mining encroachment on indigenous lands. Correa kicked the U.S. Air Base and U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency out of Ecuador, reduced foreign debt by 60 percent, and restructured oil deals. These revenues allowed payments to workers of \$30 per month. By 2009 he openly accepted neoliberal austerity and sided with the mining industry. Popular protests drove him out of the country in 2017.

Argentina

Nestor Kirchner and Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner came to power as "left-wing" Peronists. Argentina had been the most industrialized country in Latin America. Neoliberal austerity in the 1990's ended trade barriers, destroying industries

and leading to mass unemployment and poverty. A mass piquetero movement of unemployed workers blockaded highways throughout Argentina in 2001-2.

While promising reforms and restructuring foreign debt, Fernandez cut many social programs.

Lasting change requires communist revolution

Without ending capitalism, working class reforms are soon lost. The Pink Tide took over existing capitalist governments and gave some crumbs to workers. But workers did not run society; they controlled nothing. Capitalists still controlled the economy, the courts, the parliament, the police, and the army. The capitalists ended the reforms ASAP.

These Pink Tide governments temporarily masked some of capitalism's ugliness, helping local capitalists stay in power during mass rebellions. They cooperated with local capitalists and supported financial ties with Russian and Chinese imperialists. Reform promotes capitalism.

Progressive Labor Party wants to overthrow capitalism and organize a system of workers' power dedicated to the betterment of the worldwide working class. That's communism.

Learning from history

Bernie Sanders, Elizabeth Warren and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez are wooing the working class in the U.S. They promise a \$15/hour minimum wage, Medicare for all, free public college, and a Green New Deal. Some workers might benefit. But capitalist reforms are temporary, and more exploitation and profiteering wars are coming. As we fight for reforms, let's not be distracted from the ultimate goal: a world free of war, racism, sexism, exploitation, and inequality.

We can build a world with housing, jobs, healthcare, education, and more, all run for and by the working class. But not by voting. The bosses won't let us vote away their money and power. We must destroy capitalism with an organized movement for communist revolution. Join us.✊

LETTERS

We encourage all CHALLENGE readers to send in letters and articles about their experiences fighting the bosses worldwide.

**CAPITALISM
BREEDS SEXISM
RACISM
& IMPERIALISM!**



**FIGHT FOR A COMMUNIST
WORLD
BUILD THE INTERNATIONAL
PLP!
PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY**

Communism is climate justice

Comrades of the Progressive Labor Party in the Washington, DC area and I attended planning meetings for the Climate Strike called “Shut Down DC.” We participated in affinity groups, where the tactical goal was to organize the broader climate coalition to disrupt the morning rush hour by blocking key intersections, somewhat like the May Day anti-war demonstration in 1971. This action managed to disrupt traffic for about three hours at 22 locations city-wide.

On the day of the action my health worker affinity group gathered alongside the Black Lives Matter DC contingent at 6:30 am at Folger Park, near the Capitol Building. From there we marched to the Health and Human Services Building along 2nd and Independence Avenues. We blocked traffic for a short time, but a large aggressive police presence forced us back onto a nearby plaza. Nevertheless we were able to cross intersections with large banners such as “Climate Justice is Health Justice,” that were seen by hundreds of commuters.

We also took blood pressure readings for local residents, and led bold chants with climate and health related slogans against the bosses. We demanded health care services in Wards 7 and 8, the poorest part of the city, where OB-GYN services have been shut down at the only hospital there. We also demanded that Muriel Bowser, DC’s Black female mayor, provide quality health care in Wards 7 and 8.

But we know that no matter how diverse the bosses’ representatives are, they continue to fail workers. Therefore, Bower’s administration will only reflect the growing crisis of capitalism that requires fewer services for the working class and more profits for the developers and the capitalists.

Throughout these meetings and actions, we met many new friends who see capitalism as the enemy. We encouraged other fighters in these groups to attend our PLP forum “Capitalism, climate change, and communist revolution.”

We will continue to work with these militant and committed fighters, and use these great opportunities to defeat electoral and reformist thinking among many of these new young fighters. We hope to win them to the Party and the fight for communism.

★★★★★

Town hall exposes Ras Baraka as liberal misleader

Newark, NJ mayor Ras Baraka held a Town Hall Meeting earlier this month on the State of the Water in the city. The event was promoted as being a space where Newark community members could get an update on the lead water crisis, but it turned into a comedy show. In my eyes, I sensed nervousness all through Baraka’s body language.

While standing and exiting the premises with the Newark Water Coalition, an advocacy group in Newark fighting for the people, I saw what true politics are about.

Members of the Newark Water Coalition were escorted from the premises by police and security guards after an outburst was made from a member of the coalition, and it made me realize how much order is needed and appreciated in this capitalist system. Disruptions are not allowed because it shows humans thinking for themselves and the possibility for free thinking in the future. It’s all a game.

The way to find an end to capitalism will be a long fight but with the strong will of the people, I think we will be all right. The world is waking up; we just need organization.

★★★★★

Role of reform in revolutionary party

Sometimes our articles and letters in CHALLENGE describe what the unions or organizations we are in are doing with little or superficial connection to how we raise PLP’s communist ideas and build a Party base within these reform struggles.

Communist philosophy, dialectical material-

ism, teaches us that reform and revolution are a unity of opposites in contradiction. In our practice we don’t treat this contradiction as developing along parallel lines, nor will we build the Party in this period just by exposing capitalist misleaders/agents and saying that communist revolution is the only solution. Both are true and necessary to say, but where is the process? We must go through a persistent, long term struggle to intensify the contradiction on the side of revolution, quantity to quality.

The South Bronx professors letter, “Study and Practice” in the last issue of CHALLENGE was illuminating. It was helpful to see the relationship between PLP’s communist study group, the focus on anti-racism, discussion with our friends about our analysis of voting under capitalism, the role of CHALLENGE and our participation in the movement on campus against tuition increases and for higher wages for part-time faculty. This is practice that will lead to growth of the Party.

Lenin said the conditions for revolution are when the working class can’t live in the same old way, the ruling class can’t rule in the same way and there is a strong communist party to lead the revolution. PLP’s goal is to build a mass Party. We must improve our practice to close the gap, over time, from where we are now, a small-determined Party, to a larger, and in the future, a mass Party!

★★★★★

How Dare You?

Greta Thunberg, teenage Swedish fighter, shocked the United Nations Climate Change Assembly when, in effect, she said, “You (world leaders) are responsible for the suffering and deaths of millions worldwide and when schoolchildren are forced to leave their classrooms to plead for their future lives, all you can say is we don’t have the money, how dare you!”

Now climate fighters must dare to ask other questions like, what system would sacrifice workers’ lives for their classes’ profit gains? What system since its inception—through colonialism and imperialism—made endless genocidal wars that sacrificed millions of workers for their classes’ profits? What system continues to use racism and sexism to divide the world’s working class for their profits? The only logical answer is that capitalism is the system that is destroying the working class and will continue unless we unite to destroy it.

Climate change will never be stopped through capitalist elections because politicians only consider whether any legislation will cause the capitalists who finance them any loss of profits. The Progressive Labor Party is fighting to destroy capitalism and to build a communist system that provides for the needs of the working class and ends the profit system. Join us, we dare you!

★★★★★

Divisions and diversions in Catalonia

In Catalonia we are in our sixth night of battle against the police and Barcelona is literally burning. The biggest supporters of the Catalanian independence movement are the petit bourgeois (shop owners), white collar workers (office workers, government employees and administrators, schoolteachers, hospital workers), students, and retired workers.

The industrial working class in the factories, transit, and dockworkers are mostly immigrants or are from other parts of Spain like Andalucía, Extremadura, etc. They aren’t necessarily against independence, but they’re not seduced by it either.

Now, Spanish state violence is serving to unite these workers together. Spain is a fascist state. The police here are no joke. Local police in Catalonia (“Mossos d’esquadra”) are trained by the Israeli intelligence service Mossad. The national police are trained by the Spanish military, and there are also “guardias civiles,” military who also do police work. These state sponsored thugs hit hard.

So last Friday, when the industrial workers saw that this past week of rebellion was met with repression, detention and torture, the dockworkers

Continued on page 7

LETTERS CONTINUED...

and other industrial workers went out on strike and joined in support.

Over the last nine years the movement itself has been run by local Catalanian capitalists and their politicians, who rarely called for demonstrations. Everything changed with the independence referendum on October 1, 2017, when people who never went to a demonstration before were literally crushed by the police. The local Catalanian capitalists handled it disastrously. Tricks, lies, and broken promises showed that these “independen-tista” politicians and capitalists would rather kneel before the Spanish capitalists because they’re too afraid.

People are starting to divorce from these politicians. I think the role of communists has two sides in this struggle. On the one hand we are part of this fight for more democracy and self-determination. Workers here are getting smashed by the police and all the power of the state, and the only people that support the fascist violence are the fascist Spanish nationalists. These days there have been demonstrations in support of Catalonia from workers in Madrid, Andalucía, Basque country, etc.

On the other hand, I am a communist and an internationalist. Before anything, we are workers. I am not a Catalanian nationalist and I know this fight for independence is a fight between two dogs.



More and more people in Catalonia are seeing this now as a fight with the fascist Spanish state, not against other workers in Spain.

Ironically, the only way for the “independen-tistas” to win against the Spanish capitalist state is by fighting hand in hand with all the workers of Spain. I think it is time to attack both the Spanish and Catalanian capitalists and convince the workers to take leadership of the movement. But if this were easy, we would already be living in a People’s Republic! There is a like-minded group of us who would like to discuss more with CHALLENGE.

CHALLENGE response: *Thank you for your account of Catalonia and we look forward to being in conversation with you. We agree that before anything, we are all workers. So, communist internationalism is in direct contradiction with nationalism and democracy. That’s because nationalism, the special interest of one group of workers at the exclusion of another group, is a ruling class idea. Yes, we cannot choose a side in the bosses’ infighting; both the Catalanian separatist bosses and the Spanish bosses are enemies of the working class. Instead, we must fight to build a movement independent of all these bosses’ control. That means attacking both democracy and self-determination as lethal ideas for our class*

★★★★★



RED EYE ON THE NEWS ...

Immigrant wage-slave labor rebuilds Florida

NYT, 10/6 — They arrived by the hundreds last year after Hurricane Michael sliced through the Florida Panhandle....[and] got to work carting away the wreckage.

In the ensuing months, the workers — nearly all from Central America, Mexico and Venezuela — toiled day and night...to reopen Panama City’s City Hall, repair the local campus of Florida State University and fix damaged roofs on several churches. In...Callaway, which saw 90 percent of its housing stock damaged by the Category 5 Storm...they are still working...

The increased frequency and severity of such disasters have given rise to a new recovery-and-reconstruction work force across the South.... overwhelmingly made up of immigrants....

...The hurricane workers move from disaster to disaster....after Hurricane[s] Katrina,...Harvey,...Florence,... and Michael....Many of the hurricane workers are undocumented immigrants.... But since arriving...many...have been exploited by employers who do always pay what they are owed, or landlords who charge exorbitant rent...

“Sometimes we work and work, we trust people and we don’t get paid.” A group of immigrants who cleaned up the Florida Keys after Hurricane Irma...were not paid minimum wage or overtime for hours worked....[Bellaliz Gonzalez] estimates that she is owed \$2,000....“Wage theft is a tremendous hindrance to the rebuilding of this part of the country...”...Ana Salazar, 58, said she had come from Venezuela with her two sons to do debris removal and reconstruction...employed by Winterfell Construction, owned by a county commissioner...but they have received absolutely no payment from the company....

Each time the unpaid workers sought redress...they were threatened with eviction....

“We didn’t have any other place to live,” she said. “To eat we had to forage for leftovers...in abandoned houses,” ...[and] calculates that she is

owed \$6,713....

Migrant protesters block international border bridge

NYT, 10/11 — Amid growing tensions over deteriorating conditions at the border, hundreds of migrants who had been blocked from entering the United States shut down an international bridge in South Texas...disrupting. A normally busy connection between the United States and Mexico. Between 250 and 300 migrants marched overnight to a point midway cross the Gateway International Bridge between Matamoros, Mexico and Brownsville, Texas, sitting in the vehicle lanes and blocking traffic in both directions for about 15 hours....

...The Gateway Bridge is near an encampment where about 1,000 migrants, mainly from Central America, have been living in squalid conditions while they await immigration court hearings in the United States. In recent interviews, families have described children falling ill...[and] plagued by thugs....“They are absolutely desperate, with no international presence in the camp to organize anything such as food delivery or medical care.”

Yemen: U.S. ‘complicit’ in Saudi airstrikes

GW, 9/7 — At the table of New York’s Yemen Café...conversation is dominated by news of atrocities back east....The latest heartbreak involved the news that American-made weapons were used in an airstrike that killed dozens of children on a school bus as they were coming back from a picnic...UN investigators reported...that Saudi-led coalition airstrikes had caused “most of the documented civilian casualties....”Yemeni Americans...are anguished by the war, which has killed 6,600 civilians since 2015. Their pain is made worse by Trump’s travel ban, which has left civilians trapped in a conflict zone....Ghamdan Shahbain, 31, said: “It hurts, it is a tragedy, it’s a crime, it’s very devastating. They were just kids, trying to live their life.”

His cousin, Younis Ali, 32,...said...“The U.S. has been backing Saudi Arabia ever since they started this fight...”...There is “American com-

plicity” in what the UN has called criminal carnage.

U.S. support for the Saudi-led airstrikes started under Barack Obama....

Sioux San hospitals absolutely sickening

NYT, 10/16 — The problems at Sioux San, one of the 24 hospitals nationwide run by the Indian Health Service...are pervasive....Patients have died at Sioux San from inadequate care, are often given...wrong diagnoses and are treated by staff members...not screened for hepatitis and tuberculosis.

The troubles were so severe that Sioux San’s ER and inpatient unit were shutdown.

...Sioux San is emblematic of...the Indian Health Service, which provides government medical care to 2.2 million of the nation’s 3.7 million American Indians and Alaska Natives...and is widely judged to provide substandard care....But after years of suffering...tribal nations say seizing control of their health care systems may be their best option....A quarter of medical positions within the Indian Health Service — doctors, dentists and nurses — are vacant.

In some areas, the vacancy rate is as high as 50 percent. The death rates for preventable diseases...are three to five times higher for Native Americans....In 2016, the federal government spent \$8,602 per capita on health care for Federal inmates compared with \$2,843 per patient with the Indian Health Service. In 2017, The Indian Health Service spent \$3,332 per patient....Medicare spent \$12,829 per patient....

In South Dakota, the life expectancy for Native Americans is 57, which is 24 years less than for white residents...Since 2016, the Indian Health Service...has declined to pay medical bills for more than 500,000 patients, saddling them with more than \$2 billion in medical debt....

Congress has consistently declined to provide the Indian Health Service with substantially more money to overhaul the way Native Americans get health care....

BIG FASCISTS PAY BIG PRICE FOR SMALL FASCIST TRUMP'S IMPEACHMENT

It's Not Just TRUMP



It's CAPITALISM

The Trump withdrawal of U.S. troops from Syria is ratcheting up the fight between the Big Fascist and Small Fascist U.S. ruling class factions. The Big Fascist liberal bosses' move to impeach and discipline Trump and his ilk is continuing to expose the weaknesses in the institutions of the capitalist state. Trump is being further unmasked as a self-serving opportunist who has cut a deal to serve his Small Fascist masters, as well as himself. Segregationist architect of mass incarceration Joe Biden is also being exposed as being personally corrupt, as his son Hunter has been given free rein to cash in on the family name.

The in-fighting is lifting the curtain from the bosses' institutions. Both sides are laying bare the cynical blackmailing and leveraging that goes on behind the scenes every day. No U.S. president going forward will be able to lead unencumbered by skepticism about personal corruption and being owned by one set of bosses or the other. As the house of the U.S. ruling class is being engulfed in escalating battles between fascist factions, our class' way forward is to advance in the face of fear and reject whatever bribes or false hopes are offered by either section of these murderers. We must fight for communist revolution and workers' power.

The damage to the rulers' image caused by impeachment speaks to the desperation of the Big Fascist liberal bosses to regain control of the presidency. Over the last 70 years, tremendous power has been concentrated in the White House. The Trump presidency has amounted to a sustained assault on the institutions—the CIA, NATO, the UN—holding up a U.S.-imperialist-led world order that has been in place since the end of World War II. Over that entire period, the power concentrated in the White House has only grown, making it the grand prize of U.S. ruling class power. The U.S. ruling class has become the most powerful and deadly in history in the ecosystem of these institutions.

This situation served the big fascists well when they had more complete control of the system. More recently, the big fascist liberal bosses saw a stronger president as a way to control the small fascist domestic bosses. A move in that direction, buried in the Hart-Rudman report (2001), was a proposal to undercut the power of the House of Representatives, where the Small Fascists had won control of many districts, with the formation of a national steering committee made up of the president and the leadership of the House and Senate.

As the Small Fascists gained strength and took control of the Senate, the Big Fascists saw the presidency as their line in the sand. In 2016, in anticipation of Hillary Clinton getting elected, the major liberal academic expert on the U.S. presidency, University of Chicago's William Howell, called for more power to the office: "Yes [the president should have more power]...because ... Congress channels short term local interests" (U of Chicago Big Brains podcast, ep. 27).

Now, with the Small Fascists in control of the White House, Howell, and the rest of the Big Fascists who back him, have changed their tune, saying:

"There are some powers that the president... has...that should be curtailed...The president's ability to politicize the Justice Department is deeply problematic. The president's pardon power is deeply problematic, and the president's unilateral powers are a mixed bag" (U of Chicago Big Brains podcast, ep. 27).

Liberal patriotism is a cover for growing fascism

The Big Fascist liberal bosses know they may be biting off their nose to spite their face by tearing down the institution. "Democrats may regret...wounding the presidency when Mr. Trump's successors grapple with the rise of China as a global power, Russia's revanchism [Ed.—retaliation to regain lost territory], Iran's quest for regional hegemony and North Korea's nuclear proliferation" (NY Times, 9/24).

If the Big Fascists can regain the White House, they may try to remake the institution. Don't be surprised if they move towards the Hart-Rudman proposed gang of fascists-at-the-top model or some other revamping to cement their hold on power.

The inability of the Big Fascist liberal bosses to be assured control of the White House and the delegitimizing of the presidency is a major setback for this fascist faction. Historically, the U.S. bosses have relied on the president to be the face of the ruling class in sending the working class to kill and die for the bosses' interests. More and bigger wars are on the horizon as the bosses in China and Russia press U.S. imperialism around the globe. An illegitimate president poses huge political problems for the bosses.

To rebuild confidence in their decrepit capitalist system, the Big Fascists are trying to use the liberal movements they lead to incite the fascist slogan: "country first." But falling for their promise of unity across class lines with the Big Fascist liberals will be devastating for the working class around the world. Our slogan must now and forever be: "power to the working class, fight for communism."✊

Big Fascists in Action U.S. Immigration Policy

Big Fascists are the liberal/imperialist/finance capital wing of the U.S. ruling class. Their plan is to usher in a broader and more devastating multicultural fascism, to discipline their enemies in the ruling class, and attack the working class in preparation for wider wars against their imperialist rivals.

Immigration is just one window into how dangerous the Big Fascists are. When a fascist surveillance machinery system called SBI (Secure Border Initiative) was deployed in the Tuscon, Arizona area from 2006 to 2011, migrants were funneled into steep desert terrain that made the area southwest of Tuscon a 'land of open graves' with over 1,200 working class migrants perishing over the period SBI was in place (thehill.com, 2/11/19). Today's Democrats, while posing as pro-immigrant in contrast to Trump's border wall, have supported proposals for a similar 'smart-border' wall that will "combine remote sensors, integrated fixed towers, drones and other intelligence assets" and "create a technological barrier too high to climb over, too wide to go around and too deep to burrow under," in the words of Rep. James Clyburn, the #3 Democrat.

Real-ID is another example of the Big Fascism of the liberal, finance capital-led wing of the U.S. ruling class. Liberal-led mass organizations have pushed hard for undocumented workers to have government-issued ID in sanctuary cities. In 12 states and Washington, D.C., the undocumented have been granted driver's licenses. Now it turns out that ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) is using this documentation to gather intelligence for raids in Washington State (NYT, 10/3/19). Soon everyone who wants to fly on a plane must have some sort of nationally-approved 'Real-ID.' As well-meaning workers in the mass movement fought for the 'right' of 'ID for all,' the Big Fascists are lining up all of society for a government-issued standard form of identification that denotes one's immigration status.

Trump has built a mass racist anti-immigrant movement. To call it "small fascist" does not diminish its danger to our class. Meanwhile, the Big Fascists are mobilizing the anti-racist, pro-worker aspirations of the anti-Trump forces into a movement that will attack workers with even more dangerous assaults than Trump has yet been able to muster. Workers are being given two options, both fascist. PLP's job is to offer a third—communist revolution.

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